

becomes a scene of utter desolation with its parched and cracked surface and its filthy odour of decay. The crocodiles have to take a long track on dry land to the next water. This they undertake after dark and the journey is accomplished usually in one night but occasionally an individual miscalculates the distance to its next abode and is compelled to lie up for the day concealed in dense undergrowth, or it is, as may happen, surprised in its wanderings by the villagers and killed with their 'kulharis' (hatchets).

There were five or six of us on the stone parapet beside the tank and it was about 6 in the evening. Down in the tank about fifty yards away a long black line (a partly submerged crocodile) was clearly visible in the water. One of the party, a State Jagirdar and a good steady shot, took careful aim and fired. The 'croc' slightly lifted to one side, and for a moment one just caught a glimpse of its creamy belly and then it just floated on the water, utterly still. Immediately one of the local 'Bunrakhas' (trackers) was sent down into the water to drag the 'croc' out. We could see it was a small creature, about 4 feet in length, and the man had armed himself with a 'kulhari' as a safeguard. His task was easily accomplished for the crocodile was in shallow water and was now being dragged up the steps by the tail, the man putting in all his strength to do so. Man and 'mugger' were half way up the steps, when suddenly the animal showed signs of life. It jerked its head right and left in an attempt to get at the man, and swished its tail about angrily, while the poor chap (now at his wits' end !) held tightly on to it.

We shouted to him to hit it with his 'kulhari' (firing would not have been safe) while a couple of fellows dashed down to his rescue. He promptly released the mugger giving it in parting a sound blow or two on the head, which stunned the creature, and with the aid of others the 'croc' was finally dragged upto us. Close inspection revealed that it was completely unhurt. The bullet had not so much as touched its body anywhere. It was finished off with a hatchet.

The rifle used was a Savage 250/3000. Did the shock of its report or the terrific impact of the bullet near at hand, temporarily stun the animal?

PALACE ROAD,
NAGPUR, C.P.

QUAZI Q. AHMED.

2nd February, 1945.

20.—A NEW RECORD OF A RARE SNAKE (*NATRIX XENURA*) FROM ASSAM.

I would like to record the taking of a further specimen of a very rare snake, first described under the name *Tropidonotus xenura* by Wall (1907) in this *Journal*, Vol. xvii, No. 3.

Whilst stationed near Kohima in the Naga Hills, Assam in May, 1944, a small and sombrely coloured snake was brought to